



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority 2009-10 Service Plan

FRA Meeting 26 June 2009- Agenda Item No. 13-Appendix 1.

Service Plan 2009-10

Foreword by Chairman of Fire Authority and CFO

All public authorities, including the Fire and Rescue Authority, currently face a number of significant challenges. Budgets are tighter than ever before and we need to prepare for further pressures in the coming years, scrutiny and audit of our performance is more robust than ever. The requirement to maintain a strong performing authority in this challenging environment puts significant pressures on staff and the Service.

We're pleased that the Service has consistently proved itself to be up to the challenge. We have put into place a challenging new Integrated Risk Management Plan which outlines our response to the Government's Efficiency Agenda, as well as our ambitions for delivering a continuously improving service to the public.

Despite receiving one of the lowest levels of Government grant of any Fire and Rescue Authority, this year's assessments by the Audit Commission have again placed us amongst the top five Authorities in the country. This year's external assessment has also shown us to be "Improving Strongly" from a position where we were already a "Good" authority.

We're proud of the staff who have made this possible with the ongoing commitment and unquestionable ability to make the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire safer.

Brigadier Peter Jones CBE
Chairman of the Authority

Paul Hayden
Chief Fire Officer/Chief Executive

Introduction

The Service Plan outlines the areas of focus for 2009/10, and reports on our performance in 2008/09. It lists each area of activity to the overall organisational strategy and direction, providing an overview of what we do, why we do it and how well we do it.

The Government's programme of legislative requirements placed on us changes from year to year, and has been considerable this year. For the first time we no longer have Best Value Performance Indicators, and the range and detail of the Audit Commission's assessments is wider than it has ever been, and places its own challenges on the Service. However, the Authority continues to perform outstandingly in this area.

The Authority has vastly expanded its work with partners, reflecting the national agenda of improving the effectiveness of services to local communities by working with public authorities such as the Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Councils, the District Councils in Worcestershire and West Mercia Constabulary.

The Authority continues to develop its services and strengthen its local, regional and national position. The environment is, and will remain for the foreseeable future, a challenging one with difficult efficiency targets to meet, in the context of an uncertain financial position.

Context Statement / who are we?

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority is constituted under the Fire and Rescue Services Act 2004. The Fire & Rescue Authority comprises 25 Elected Members, 19 from Worcestershire and 6 from Herefordshire which is a unitary Authority. Worcestershire comprises six district councils and the county council. The Authority has an annual budget of around £30 million.

Fire and rescue services, including fire safety activities, are provided from 27 fire stations strategically located across the two counties. These services are co-ordinated within three geographical districts which coincide with Local Authority and Police boundaries. The Service has five Wholetime Stations based in the cities of Hereford and Worcester and the three towns of Kidderminster, Bromsgrove and Redditch. It also operates three day-crewed Stations in the Worcestershire towns of Malvern, Droitwich and Evesham. The Retained Duty service is mainly based in Herefordshire, with 12 out of the 19 Retained Stations located here. The Fire and Rescue Service has an establishment of 332 Wholetime posts, 369 Retained posts, 28 Fire Control staff and 127 support staff. We also host one of 20 national Urban Search and Rescue specialist units.

The Fire Authority attends approximately 9,000 emergency incidents each year. The majority of calls for assistance are to fires, road traffic collisions and alerts from automatic alarm systems. In our area in particular, there are also calls for rope rescues, grass fires in open areas, and to assist when floods strike. We have highly trained specialist teams to deal with these specific types of emergencies.

Our Vision, Strategic Objectives and Values

We have a clear corporate vision and supporting strategic objectives that provide the direction for our corporate planning towards the further development of the Service.

Our long term vision is:

“To Make Herefordshire and Worcestershire safer from fire and other hazards and to improve community well-being”

Our strategic objectives are:

- **Community:** We will improve the safety of the community by targeting at risk groups, improving the environment within which we live and by working and engaging with the people we serve
- **People:** We will ensure the fair and equitable treatment of both our staff and the people we serve and promote the training and safety of all our personnel
- **Business Process and Organisational Development:** We will develop and implement systems, procedures and structures to improve efficiency and effectiveness, mitigate risk, enable effective response to emergencies and to review, monitor and measure our performance
- **Finance and Resources:** We will ensure the economic use of resources, meeting budgetary challenges and maximising funding opportunities in order to deliver value for money services

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service is committed to the values of the Fire and Rescue Service. These values are a way of recognising the standard at which we operate, the ethos behind the Service, and are intended to provide a benchmark for every employee in every situation.

Our values are a way of displaying the spirit in which all personnel pursue our organisational aims and objectives, to ensure that the service we provide is effective, equitable and positively supports the communities we serve.

Our Values

We Value Diverse Communities

- We are committed to serving all parts of our communities
- We recognise that diverse needs, expectations and risks need diverse solutions
- We always fulfil our responsibilities to people, communities and the environment
- We remove barriers to entry and seek true diversity to reflect the communities we serve
- We will challenge inappropriate behaviour
- We actively seek feedback

We Value Our People

- We are committed to developing our people
- We build relationships that are based upon mutual trust and respect
- We work in an inclusive way
- We recognise that everyone has a contribution to make
- We respect and see difference as a strength
- We behave in an ethical way
- We promote well-being of others
- We allow empathy to flourish
- We are active and participative listeners
- We communicate with honesty and integrity
- We say 'thank you'

We Value Our Fire and Rescue Service

- We are passionate about building our great reputation
- We make work rewarding and motivating
- We all pull together in the right direction
- We are a team and not a family
- We enjoy and celebrate our work
- We focus on priorities by setting clear objectives and accountabilities
- We provide the right service at the right time and in the right place

We Value Innovation, Change and Learning

- We encourage critical and lateral thinking and manage constructive challenge
- We take responsibility for improving our performance
- We develop ourselves and others to achieve our full potential
- We take responsibility for our actions
- We encourage problem solving at all levels
- We capture good ideas from wherever they originate
- We learn from our experiences

How have we performed in 2008/09?

The Comprehensive Performance Assessment in 2007/08 confirmed that Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority was continuing to improve following its overall **Good** performance in 2005.

Fire and rescue authorities were assessed under the 2008 performance framework on three elements:

- What progress Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority has made in the last year – Direction of Travel
- How Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority manages its finances and provides value for money – Use of Resources
- How Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority delivers its fire and rescue service – Service Assessment

Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority was assessed as **improving strongly** in 2008.
(A summary of the findings is provided below.)

The Audit Commission report confirmed that there have been significant reductions in fire deaths, primary and non domestic fires and all categories of arson.

This is testament to the excellent work being carried out by our staff across the two counties, who are all working to make Herefordshire and Worcestershire a safer place to live and work.

The Audit Commission concluded that:

- The Fire and Rescue Authority (FRA) is clearly delivering its vision of making local communities safer
- There is a balanced approach which recognises the importance of maintaining a high level of operational skills and preparedness whilst reducing risk
- The FRA is using partnerships and other agencies to effectively identify and access the more vulnerable groups in communities.

- The FRA is providing a good and improving level of value for money
- The FRA can demonstrate a firm commitment to the diversity and equality agenda – the proportion of women firefighters is amongst the highest nationally
- The FRA is demonstrating a robust approach to the enforcement of the Regulatory Reform Order and has a risk-based inspection programme in place.

This report confirms that our Service continues to perform exceptionally well, despite some financial challenges. Whilst we are delighted with the performance results we can never become complacent. We will continue to set ourselves challenging targets and objectives which are crucial to the success of any modern and progressive organisation and we look forward to the challenging yet rewarding times ahead.

Chartermark

We have successfully retained our Chartermark Standard for ‘Excellence in Customer Service’, with two further areas of national best practice identified as part of the assessment process. Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service now have 12 elements identified as best practice.

Community Empowerment and Consultation

What the public think of the Service that they receive is important to us. By engaging with the people of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, we can establish the impact of our services on those who use them. We conduct user satisfaction surveys on an ongoing basis to allow us to determine public opinion.

Survey Type	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
Public Survey – Overall Satisfaction (Every 3 Years)	75%	-	-	70%	-	-	64*	-
After the incident – overall satisfaction	-	-	100%	99%	99%	100%	99% - Home incidents 98% - Non Domestic Incidents	99% - Home incidents 98% - Non Domestic Incidents
Fire Safety Audit / Inspection – overall satisfaction	-	-	99%	98%	99%	99%	95%	94%
Fire Safety Schools Visit	-	-	-	-	-	97%	100%	98%
Home Fire Safety Check – overall satisfaction	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100%

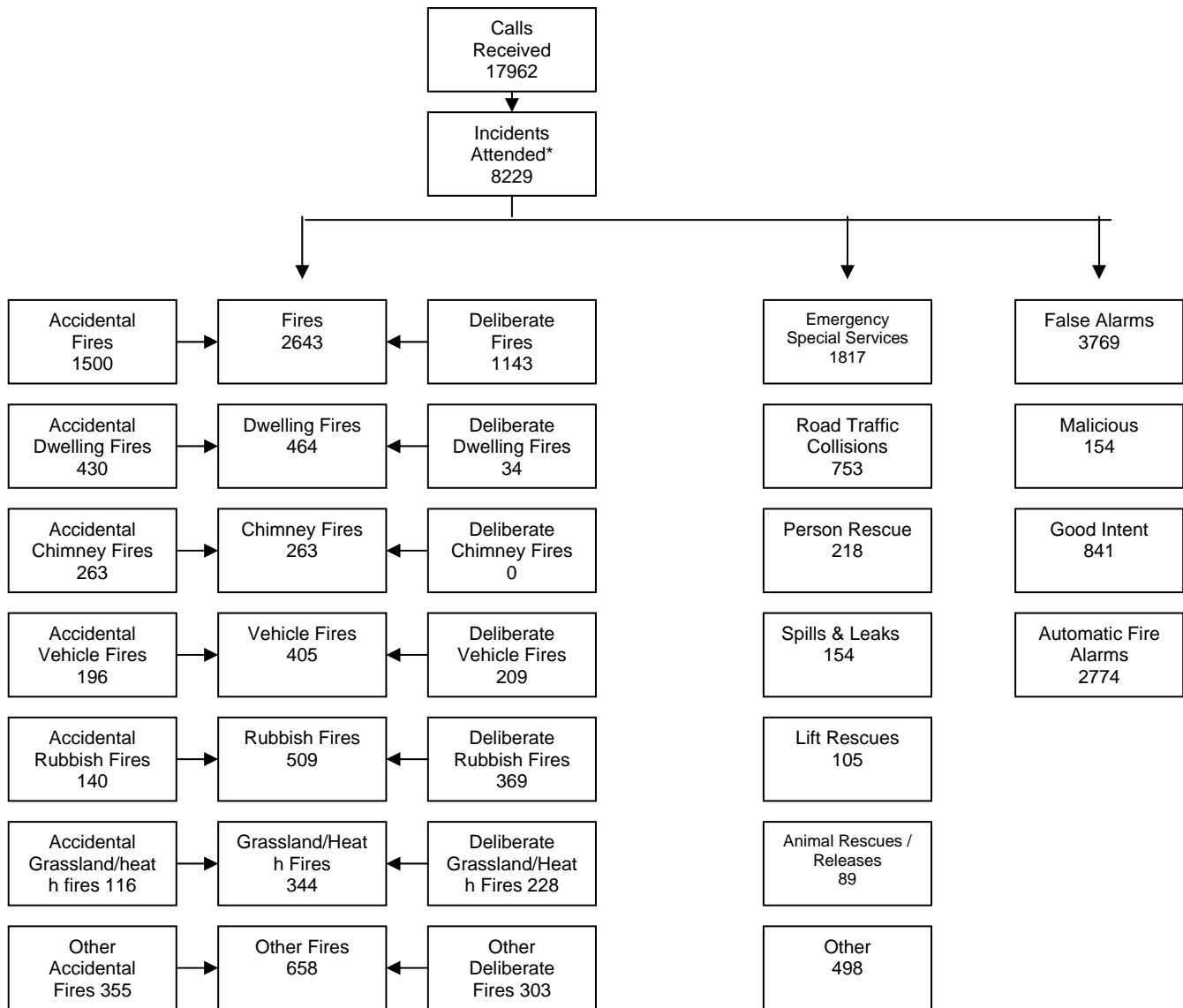
Although the Authority is well above the national average and just below the top quartile for Public Survey Results, the overall satisfaction rate is decreasing. This is comparable with the national satisfaction rate for which the trend is also downwards.

The Authority also maintains a complaints and concerns register and reports are provided to meetings of the Fire and Rescue Authority for member scrutiny and comment. During 2008/09 we received a total of 60 compliments, 24 complaints and 17 concerns from members of the public regarding our Service.

We are embracing the principles of the Government's Duty, and working with our partners, to improve the way we inform, consult and involve the people we serve.

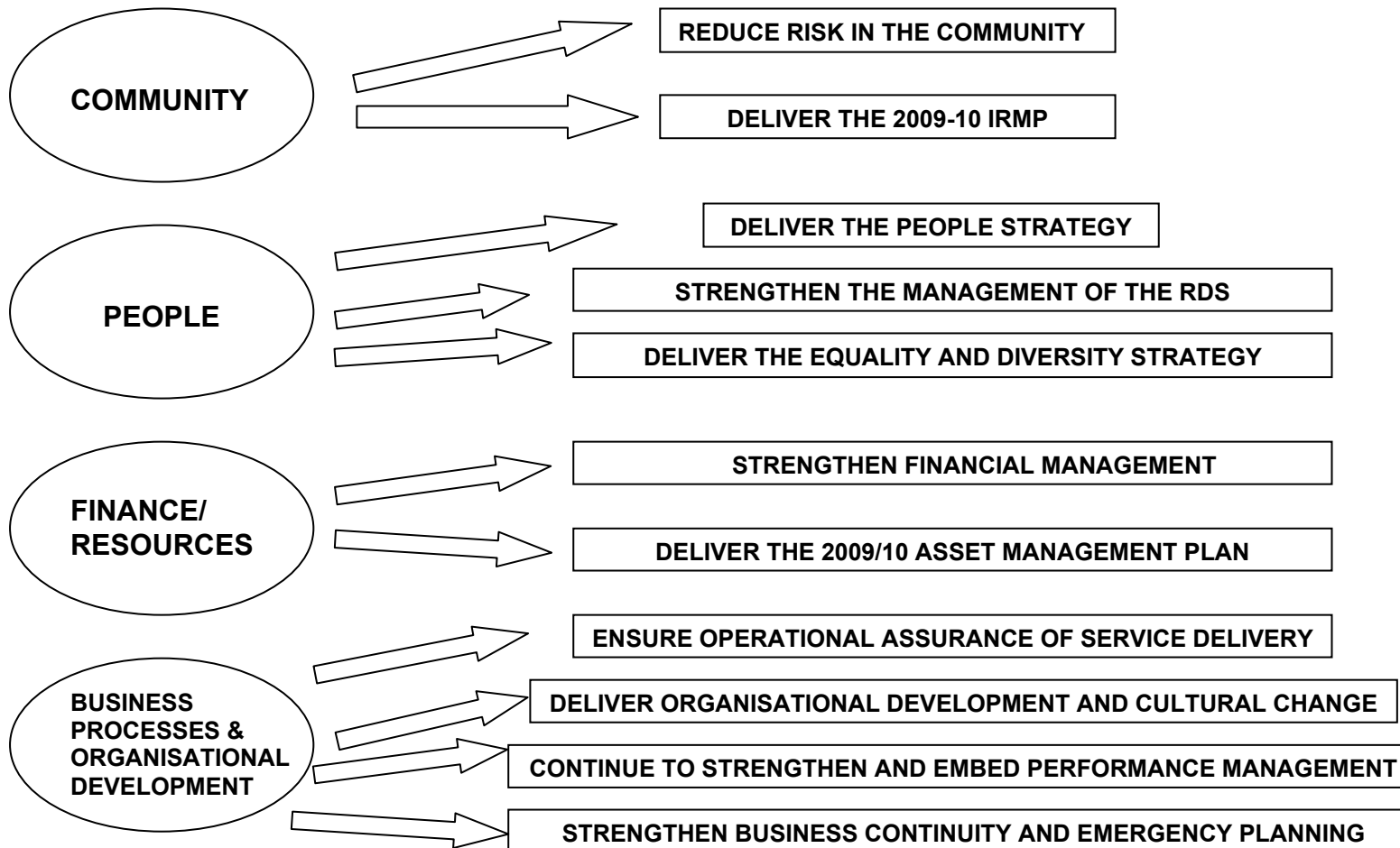
- We have developed our IRMP consultation processes to include involvement plans for the public and external stakeholder groups
- We are working with our partners in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire to develop a joint approach to improve community involvement. We are actively participating in a working group to set up a Worcestershire Joint Citizen's Panel covering the county council, 6 district councils and key partners.
- We have established a new Community Engagement panel with representatives covering the six equality strands across the two counties. This group aims to build community capacity for greater involvement in identifying issues and influencing strategy and policy.
- We have developed new Community Fire Safety recording and reporting forms to capture local engagement and involvement with community groups

Summary of 2008/09 Incidents



*(*Incidents attended within Hereford & Worcester only - the Service also attends incidents in other FRS areas)*

OUR AIMS AND OBJECTIVES



COMMUNITY

We will improve the safety of the community by targeting at risk groups, improving the environment within which we live and by working and engaging with the people we serve.

OBJECTIVE 1: Reduce Risk in the Community

- **from Fire**
- **on our Roads**
- **from the consequences of terrorism or natural disaster**
- **from hazards in or around water**
- **in the home**

We work to reduce the risks in our communities by ensuring that we have effective prevention, response and partnership arrangements.

PREVENTION

We will work with our communities to prevent fires and other incidents through our Community Safety Strategy and community education measures, particularly with 'at risk' and hard to reach groups.

Our Achievements in 2008/09

2008/09 has been a year of strong performance towards our primary objective to improve the safety of the community

- We have continued to target our prevention activities and provide home fire safety checks and community safety advice to the elderly and housebound in our communities
- We have developed a three year Community Safety Strategy with our partners. The Strategy consists of 10 specific objectives with 27 associated performance indicators and provides a framework for us to serve our communities and make them safer from fire and other hazards.
- Our Community Safety work has resulted in a reduction in the overall number of fire deaths and injuries, total calls to fires, fires in commercial premises and automatic fire alarms. This has meant fewer people suffering loss of injury and contributing to reducing the economic cost of fire to the community.

- Our Road Safety Strategy has strengthened our partnership work in reducing road traffic collisions. This is an important step towards achieving the particularly challenging long term aim of lower deaths and injuries on the road.
- We have developed our links with West Mercia Constabulary's Arson Task Force and appointed an Arson Reduction Manager to work with the police and develop an Arson Reduction Strategy.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- We will work with our partners to establish a joint database of sites, properties and numbers of caravans and occupants, to help identify priorities for inspection and to develop risk reduction strategies for migrant/seasonal/short term workers in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- We will further develop our arson reduction policy to achieve a reduction in the number of deliberate fires and a greater understanding of how to prevent deliberate fires within the Community.
- We will provide additional community safety facilities in our districts to help us reach our communities and promote community safety .
- We will expand the delivery of CS education into Special needs schools and homes to ensure equality of Service Delivery across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- We will work with our partners to design and deliver targeted Road Safety education to our communities.

PROTECTION

We will ensure that our public buildings and workplaces are protected from the risks of fire.

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- We have developed a focused and flexible Risk Based Audit Programme for Technical Fire Safety.
- We have carried out a review of the delivery and support of Technical Fire Safety.
- We have provided our Technical Fire Safety inspection staff with tablet computers to allow electronic data capture from audit inspections.

Our plans for 2009/10

- We will implement the findings of the 2008/09 review of Technical Fire Safety.
- We will upgrade the Technical Fire Safety website to improve the provision of Technical Fire Safety Information to both internal and external stakeholders.
- We will continue to develop the facilities to record technical fire safety information in the districts.

EFFECTIVE RESPONSE / INTERVENTION

Our Operational Intervention Department provides our crews with the necessary skills and equipment to provide an effective and efficient operational response whilst ensuring the safety of our crews and the community.

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- We have reviewed all of our operational policies and reissued supporting guidance
- The implementation of our Water Safety Strategy has provided an additional rescue resource for the community. We have considerably strengthened our capability to carry out rescues from water and we have plans to expand this for major flood events in response to the Pitt report into the 2007 floods. We have strengthened our specialist rescue capability, improved incident command systems and improved inter-agency operations, including local flood response planning. The Service provides strategic and tactical leadership for the development of national flood rescue response
- We have fully reviewed our incident command and debrief systems and implemented revised policies. We have trained our operational staff in the new procedures and all officers have been assessed in the principles of Incident Command.
- We have enhanced our operational capability with new specialist appliances. These appliances contribute to making firefighting safer and more efficient.
- We have developed a Service Resilience Register to ensure we have sufficient emergency cover at all times and also during spate conditions.
- We have reviewed our Over the Border Interoperability arrangements and developed joint procedures with the West Midlands Regional Management Board.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- We will facilitate the delivery of a new Incident Support Unit vehicle into the Service to further improve our incident command function.
- We will develop our Enhanced Command Support function with a new vehicle and new policy
- We will review our Breathing Apparatus Policy to ensure safer systems of work for breathing apparatus
- We will complete a review of our Intel/risk identification process for properties.
- We will review our policies and procedures for:
 - Hazardous materials
 - Animal Rescue
 - Aerial Operations
- We will develop the Service's response to Environmental incidents with new vehicle, equipment and policy

FIRE CONTROL AND FIRELINK

The Government's Fire control project aims to provide an enhanced control service using a national network of nine Regional Control Centres (RCC). The Firelink project will introduce a common interoperable radio communications system.

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- We are well prepared for the implementation of RCC and FireLink and we are meeting the project requirements and providing the necessary resources.
- A team has been recruited to coordinate and carry out the transfer of our data to the new RCC systems.
- Significant progress has been made with the FireLink project with the roll out of radios completed in February 2009.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- The Service will continue to respond to, and actively influence, the Regional Control Centre and Firelink projects

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are essential to our way of working. They help us:

- to improve and strengthen how we deliver our services
- to achieve a more efficient and effective use of our resources
- to assist our partners in providing quality services to the communities of Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

We continue to strengthen our engagement in Strategic Partnerships addressing community needs and priorities across the two counties. In particular, it has helped to strengthen the focus on the safety of our communities.

We have actively participated in preparing the new Local Area Agreements (LAA's) for 2008-11 in both Herefordshire and Worcestershire, and we have identified key areas of common concern in both the Service's own vision, objectives and priorities and the two LAA's' key objectives and priorities. The diagrams on pages 20 and 21 illustrate how our community safety work is contributing.

The Service is also involved in a number of other Strategic Partnerships:

- Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs)
- West Mercia Local Resilience Forum
- Safer Roads Partnership
- West Midlands Regional Management Board
- Rural Services Partnership

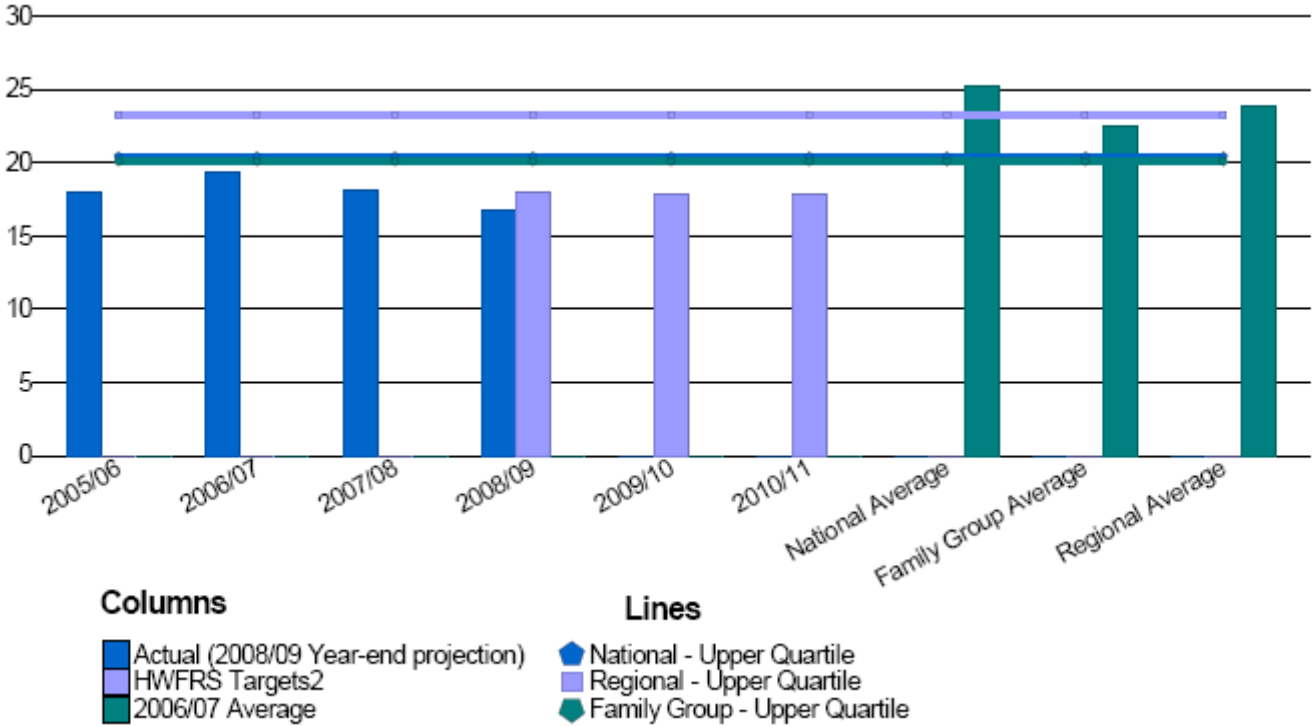
Signposting

The Signposting Service is a Partnership service that aims to connect vulnerable adults who may be at risk to appropriate statutory services they may not currently be receiving. The service is for front-line members of staff who visit people in their homes; whilst carrying out their organisations' core business, they may observe additional areas of concern that may be putting the individual at risk, and may require further assistance. By using the service, people can then be connected to services they may need. Partners include all statutory services across the counties of Hereford and Worcestershire.

We have achieved excellent performance against our Community Performance Indicators.

Total Number of primary fires per 10,000 population.

Last year we attended 1,228 primary fires. This equates to 16.74 fires per 10,000 population. We have improved on our year end totals for the last three years.



LINKING HWFRS PRIORITIES TO HEREFORDSHIRE LAA PRIORITIES

PRINCES TRUST

YOUNG FIREFIGHTERS
ASSOCIATION

IGNITE

SAFETY EDUCATION IN
SCHOOLS AND
COMMUNITIES (FIRE,
ROAD WATER HOME)

WORK WITH PUPIL
REFERRAL UNITS

JUVENILE
FIRESETTERS

FIRE STATION OPEN
DAYS

INTERAGENCY
COMMUNITY SAFETY
DAYS

INTERAGENCY
COMMUNITY SAFETY
DAYS

WORK WITH PUPIL
REFERRAL UNITS

SIGNPOSTING

ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

INTERAGENCY COMMUNITY
SAFETY DAYS

PRINCES TRUST

YOUNG FIREFIGHTERS
ASSOCIATION

IGNITE

SAFETY EDUCATION IN
SCHOOLS AND
COMMUNITIES (FIRE,
ROAD WATER HOME)

SIGNPOSTING

WORK WITH PUPIL
REFERRAL UNITS

JUVENILE FIRESETTERS

MULTI AGENCY TASKING

MALICIOUS CALL
CHALLENGING

ARSON REDUCTION

ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY

INTEGRATED CLIMATE
CHANGE RESPONSE
STRATEGY

WATER SAFETY AWARENESS
EDUCATION AND
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
WATER SAFETY STRATEGY

SUPPORT TO COMMUNITY
RESPONDING

EMBEDDED URBAN
SEARCH AND RESCUE
CAPABILITY

SPATE CONDITIONS POLICY
AND WATER RESCUE
CAPABILITY

DEVELOPMENT OF MAJOR
EMERGENCY RESPONSE
SYSTEMS

LINK TO REGIONAL AND
LOCAL RESILIENCE
FORUMS

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Improve participation in and achievement for young people in education employment and training post 14
- Encourage and enable children and young people in Herefordshire to achieve their potential and participate in positive activities

STRONGER COMMUNITIES

- Encourage thriving communities where people are able to influence, change and take action to improve their area regardless of their background.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Help vulnerable people to live safely and independently in their own homes

SAFER COMMUNITIES

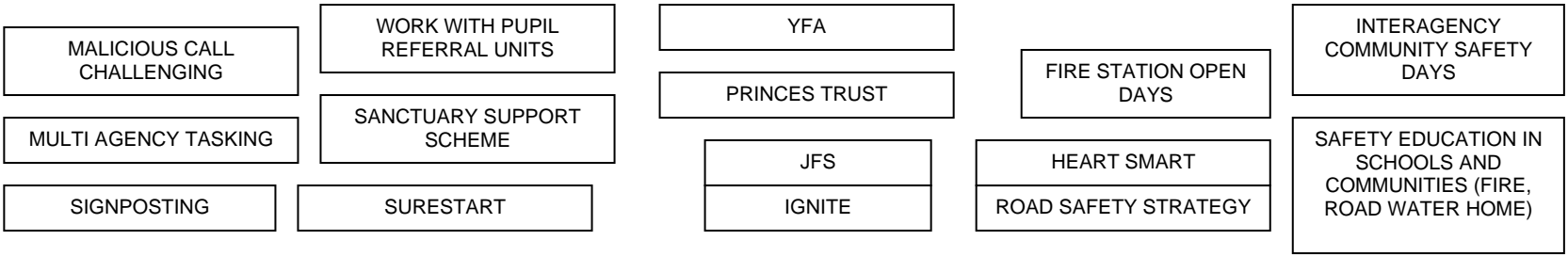
- Further reduce the already low levels of crime disorder and antisocial behaviour in the county and to reduce disproportionate fear of such
- Increase safety for Road users in the County

ENVIRONMENT

- Lead a contribution to climate change reduction
- Strengthen resilience to and recovery from civil emergencies which may have a long term impact on Herefordshire communities through effective partnership, p[planning and coordination

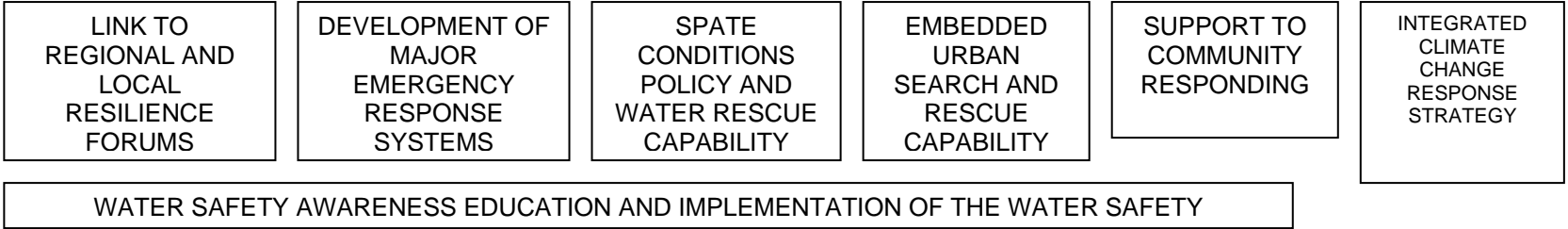
COMMUNITIES THAT ARE SAFE AND FEEL SAFE

- To continue to improve community safety and build confidence in communities



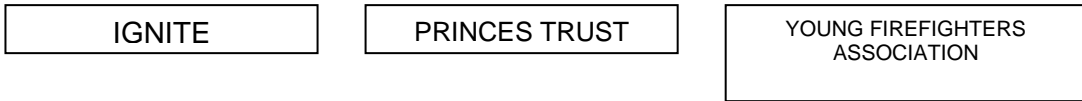
A BETTER ENVIRONMENT FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

- To improve flood mitigation measures and improve drainage



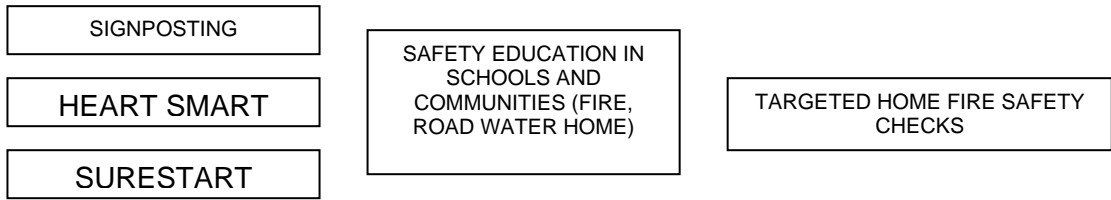
ECONOMIC SUCCESS THAT IS SHARED BY ALL

- To remove barriers to employment and improve skills in education employment and training



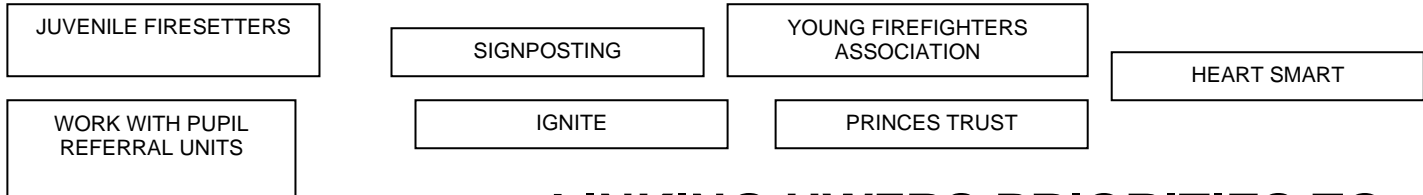
IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELL BEING

- To support and improve the leading of healthy lifestyles and wellbeing of adults and children
 - To improve the quality of life and independence of older people and those with a long term limiting illness



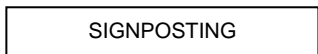
MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

To ensure young people have the opportunity to participate in positive activities



STRONGER COMMUNITIES

- To reduce levels of inequality within the community



LINKING HWFRS PRIORITIES TO WORCESTERSHIRE LAA PRIORITIES

OBJECTIVE 2: DELIVER THE 2009-12 INTEGRATED RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (IRMP)

The Authority's 2009/12 IRMP was published on 1st April 2009. This sets out a broad set of strategic objectives for Service improvement to be delivered over the 3 year period.

The IRMP evaluates risk to our communities from fire, dangers on our roads, consequences of terrorism or natural disasters. Each year we develop an Action Plan to deliver our strategy following a process of identifying existing and potential risks and an evaluation of our current arrangements.

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- We completely revised our community risk profile for the IRMP utilising new software which provides more sophisticated predictive analysis to target resources and assess risk more effectively. We worked closely with our districts and local crews to ensure that we capture local knowledge and risk information.
- The 2009/12 IRMP fully integrates our partnership commitments
- We adopted a revised attendance standard for fires in buildings. We will maintain our current standard for RTCs but continue to monitor and report against the draft standard throughout 2009/10.

2009/10 IRMP ACTION PLAN

Our 2009/10 IRMP action plan focuses on delivering efficiencies whilst ensuring that we maintain our levels of operation response. During 2009/10 we will reduce the Firefighter establishment by 12 posts that is a reduction of one post from each watch at Redditch, Kidderminster and Bromsgrove. By implementing management efficiencies this change will not affect our service provision. Significant work has been carried out to facilitate the delivery of this plan:

- The Service is implementing centralised coordination of crewing.
- The Service is implementing centrally coordinated training which will ensure crewing availability whilst delivering essential training.
- We have introduced additional training capacity in the form of 3 or 4 watch managers to provide locally delivered training.
- We are also developing new arrangements for water rescue training which will have no detrimental impact on crewing.
- The Service has developed a comprehensive policy to manage attendance and monitor progress.

During 2009/10 we will review the Service's Risk Profile and produce the 2010/11 IRMP action plan for consultation by June 2009.

PEOPLE

We will ensure the fair and equitable treatment of both our staff and the people we serve and promote the training and safety of all our personnel

OBJECTIVE 3: DELIVER THE PEOPLE STRATEGY

The Service's People Strategy provides a framework to support our aims and objectives by providing the right people in the right place at the right time with the right skills across the Service.

Our Training and Development Centre supports the implementation of the Service's IRMP by designing courses and providing training to ensure that operational staff possess the necessary skills to ensure an efficient operational response and safe systems of work.

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- We have significantly improved the support provided to the organisation through a restructure of our HR department. Our performance in the areas of recruitment, retention and promotion continues to improve
- We have reviewed and improved our Recruitment and Selection processes to ensure that they comply with legislation, exemplify national and regional good practice and contribute to delivery of the Equality Standard
- We have reviewed and strengthened our process, policies and procedures for succession planning
- We fully implemented the changes recommended by a 2007/08 review of training including:
 - Developing formal arrangements for ensuring that incident commanders at supervisory, middle and strategic level have maintained their competencies
 - Ensuring delivery of sufficient familiarisation courses to integrate new appliances and accommodate staff moves.
- We developed and delivered a Behavioural Health and Safety training programme in order to reduce the number of station based injuries and injuries at fires and subsequently the number of shifts lost to sickness. The success of this training will be evaluated during 2009/10.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- Revise our People Strategy to ensure that it continues to support the Service's aims and objectives. Our new strategy will be published in April 2010.
- Implement a computerised HR system to improve the efficiency of our HR function and improve the availability of management information.
- Conduct an Equal Pay review
- Develop the organisation's Health and Safety Strategy, including the development and delivery of training, and review of our policies in order to ensure the safety of our staff and communities.

OBJECTIVE 4: STRENGTHEN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE RETAINED DUTY SYSTEM

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- The Service has successfully completed a review of the management of our retained duty system. This was a major review which has significant implications for the Service.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- During 2009-10 we will begin to implement the findings of the review of the retained duty system. There is a significant amount of work involved in this and it is likely that this will continue into 2010/11.

OBJECTIVE 5: DELIVER THE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- Our success in achieving level 4 of the Equality Standard for Local Government (ESLG) has firmly established the Authority in the top level of performers in the country in this area. In the CLG's Equality and Diversity Report 2009, HWFRS is the second highest performing Fire Authority in the country.
- We have delivered Equality and Diversity training across the Service resulting in greater awareness of key issues amongst our staff.
- We have continued to develop and strengthen our partnership working with regional FRS and also further afield with London, Cheshire, Avon and Dorset sharing best practice and benchmarking exercises in support of our successful achievement of the ESLG.
- We have continued to challenge our organisational culture establishing and supporting Equality and Diversity subgroups. For example the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Trans Action group, Women's Action Committee and Equal Access Service Group. This illustrates the Service's commitment to tackling all forms of discrimination.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- Achieve level 5 (Excellent) of the Equality Standard for Local Government.
- Establish a robust process for assessing the Equality impact of all our Service policies and publications.
- Deliver our Positive Action Plan in accordance with best practice to support the achievement of the Service's Equality targets.
- Establish an Equalities Scrutiny Community Panel made from people within the community who have a role in this field.

BUSINESS PROCESSES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We will develop and implement systems, procedures and structures to improve efficiency and effectiveness, mitigate risk, enable effective response to emergencies and to review, monitor and measure our performance

OBJECTIVE 6: ENSURE OPERATIONAL ASSURANCE OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Our Achievements in 2008/09

The Service carried out an audit of operational assurance focusing on breathing apparatus and operational intelligence. This comprehensive review looked at existing policies and procedures, current risk management processes and examined the skills of our operational staff.

The following actions were identified and implemented during 2008/09:

- Breathing Apparatus (BA) procedural and training policies were updated and reissued to all operational staff.
- BA refresher training programmes were designed and delivered to all operational staff.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- The audit process was repeated in December 2008 and a number of areas for improvement identified. An action plan will be developed and implemented during 2009/10.
- Develop and implement an Active Incident Monitoring System.
- Continue to work within the Region to develop a policy to support the sharing of information and good practice on operational assurance and health and safety.
- Roll out our new electronic debrief system and policy.

OBJECTIVE 7: DELIVER ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL CHANGE

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- We have developed a Corporate Support Strategy to improve our Committee Service function and support for our Fire Authority members.
- We have developed a Media and Communications Strategy
- We identified and procured replacement station wear to support our Cultural Change programme.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- We will continue to implement our Cultural Development plan including the development of a Leadership Development plan.
- We will continue to develop our Corporate Support function and deliver a new Members' Development Programme.

OBJECTIVE 8: CONTINUE TO EMBED AND STRENGTHEN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- In 2008/09 the Audit Commission assessed Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service as "Improving Strongly" in its priority areas.
- We have seen excellent improvement in our performance against our 2007/08 performance indicators for our fire prevention and operational response. The Audit commission review ranked us 6th out of 48 Fire Authorities for the percentage of performance indicators improved in the last year (85%). This is above average for fire authorities (69%).
- During 2008/09, the Service has gone live with our new IT based performance management system (CORVU). The system allows us to provide detailed data to our stations and districts and target resources and community safety activities to the areas of greatest need in our communities.
- The Service successfully implemented the Incident Recording System in line with CLG requirements on February 10th 2009. Training has been delivered to all users and this focused on ensuring data quality.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- We will continue to expand our use of Corvu including the monitoring of our progress against our Departmental, District and Station business plans.
- We will continue to closely monitor our performance against Partnership objectives.
- We will continue to respond positively to all external assessments during 2009/10.

OBJECTIVE 9: STRENGTHEN BUSINESS CONTINUITY AND EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Service has developed its 2008/11 Business Continuity Policy and Strategy which aims to coordinate the response of all Service departments to an event which has the potential to affect our service delivery and operational response.

We actively engage with the West Mercia Local Resilience Forum (LRF) to develop our response to major emergencies and have incorporated the Community Risk Register into our own Service Risk Profile.

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- We have continued to embed business continuity across the service by developing departmental business continuity risk plans.
- We have developed a range of risk-based plans for business continuity arrangements for example Fuel, Terrorism, Utilities and migration to a Regional Fire Control.
- We have identified and disseminated LRF issues across the Service and delivered training to all relevant staff who will participate in Silver command.

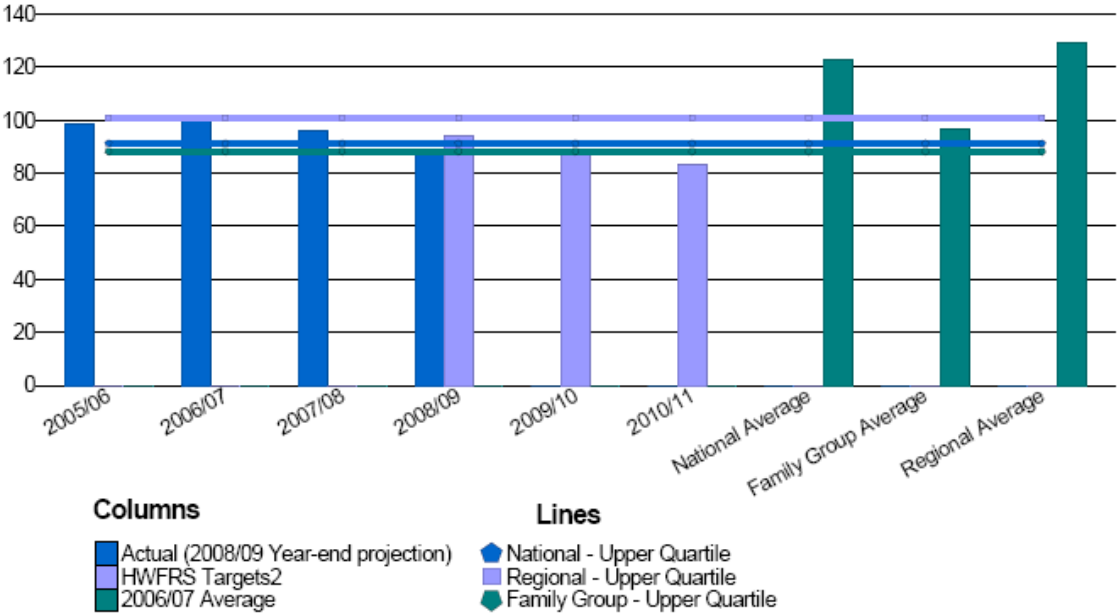
Our Plans for 2009/10

- We will continue to strengthen our business continuity planning arrangements.
- We will deliver improvements in Information Governance arrangements.

We have achieved excellent performance against our Business Process performance indicators.

The number of automatic false alarms caused by automatic fire detection equipment per 1,000 non-domestic properties.

During 2008/09 the Service attended 2,256 automatic false alarms in non-domestic properties. This is in excess of our target and represents a year on year improvement for the last 3 years. During 2009/10 we will introduce a revised policy on automatic false alarms combining national and local requirements.



FINANCE AND RESOURCES

We will ensure the economic use of resources, meeting budgetary challenges and maximising funding opportunities in order to deliver value for money services

Providing Value for Money and Delivering Efficiency

In 2009/10 the FRA will spend £30.5m providing a comprehensive community safety service across the two counties

	2008/09 £m	2009/10 £m
Gross Expenditure		
Employees (including pension costs)	22.73	23.400
Running Costs	6.230	6.360
Capital Financing	1.686	1.916
Income	(0.166)	(0.170)
Core Budget	30.523	31.506
Special Grant – Urban Search and Rescue	(0.859)	(0.859)
Special Grant – New Dimensions Training	(0.080)	(0.080)
Special Grant – Fire Control Implementation	(0.056)	(0.056)
Special Grant – Fire Control Initial Staff Pool	0.000	(0.060)
Gross Expenditure	29.528	30.451

Why spending has changed	£m
Net Budget Requirement 2008-09	29.311
Addback one of use of reserves in 2008/09	0.217
National Pay Awards & Cost Pressures	0.904
Changes to training arrangements	0.380
Impact of Asset Management Plan and Vehicle Strategy	0.230
Net Other Smaller Changes	0.040
Gross Expenditure 2009-10	31.082
Cash Releasing Efficiencies	(0.631)
Net Budget Requirement 2009-10	30.451

OBJECTIVE 10: STRENGTHEN FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Authority remains committed to delivering high quality cost effective services to its local communities and can demonstrate an impressive track record

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- The 2008/11 Comprehensive Spending Review required us to make savings and efficiencies totalling £1.275 million. We are on target to meet this challenging target, making cashable efficiencies of £225k and £525k in 2008/09 and 2009/10 respectively.
- We have reduced our financial risk and enhanced our business continuity arrangements by developing a strategy to meet contingencies which disrupt the delivery of financial services to the FRS.
- Our new financial management information system has been further enhanced, to the benefit of all users, especially budget holders, leading to tighter financial control.
- We have developed a training strategy to raise levels of financial awareness and improve financial management among our managers.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- We will enhance our new financial management information system by completing the installation of the Asset Management Module and carrying out a review of functionality to enhance efficiency and accuracy.
- We will identify and install a replacement Retained Duty System pay system.
- We will review and revise our finance policies and guidance literature.
- We will deliver training to our managers in good financial management.

OBJECTIVE 11: DELIVER THE ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Authority has in place a comprehensive Asset Management Plan which provides strategic direction for improving and maintaining our buildings and facilities.

Our Asset Management Plan ensures the procurement and replacement in a timely manner of the necessary equipment to maintain our operational performance and ensure the safety of the community and our staff whilst minimising the impact to the environment and addressing sustainability issues.

Our Achievements in 2008/09

- Works on the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) training rig and building at Droitwich station were completed in November 2008. This provides a more effective training facility supporting improved service delivery and community safety.
- Our Operational Logistics facility moved to a new site at Betony Road in Malvern. The site was officially opened in April 09 by HRH the Princess Royal.
- We have provided an Archive facility for the Service at our Betony Road site.

Our Plans for 2009/10

- We will continue to manage our property portfolio to ensure that our fire stations are appropriately located and have the necessary facilities to provide an effective and economic service in compliance with statutory duties.
- We will deliver the Training Buildings Strategy and provide suitable training facilities at Malvern and Droitwich.

SUSTAINABILITY

Protecting the environment and mitigating climate change is a significant concern for our community. Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (the FRS) recognises that it has a part to play in preserving the natural environment.

We recognise that the operations and activities that we carry out have the potential to impact on the environment and we are committed to improving our environmental performance through the following measures:

- Implement an Environmental Management System that is aligned with the international ISO 14001:2004 Standard.
- Comply with all relevant environmental legislation, Acts and other requirements to which we subscribe
- Prevent pollution of the environment from any of the operational and training activities that we carry out.
- Include environmental issues in all planning and decision making.
- Continually improve on our environmental performance by setting objectives and targets and reviewing performance against them.
- Put measures in place to control and reduce the environmental impacts of significant aspects.
- Seek suppliers and subcontractors with environmental standards consistent with our own.
- Minimise the use of energy, water and raw materials in our buildings and during our operational activities.
- Purchase the most environmentally benign materials appropriate to the job and continually review materials used.
- Undertake work with our community to prevent and reduce the numbers of fires and road traffic collisions.
- Communicate the policy to all employees and make it available to the public and stakeholders on request.

During 2008/09 the Service has procured 4 vehicles fitted with compressed air foam systems (CAFS). These systems use 10 times less foam concentrate and considerably less water than our standard appliance. This results in less environmental impact and increased firefighting efficiency.

The Service has also recently procured 3 small vans to undertake work in the Community. These vans will deliver far better fuel economy than the vehicles currently being used to undertake this work.

Our Environmental Protection Unit is also being upgraded in 2009/10 and this will result in increased capacity to deal with incidents involving hazardous materials.

The Authority has also signed up to the Worcestershire Climate Change Pledge 2009/10 which aims to:

- Reduce total Greenhouse Gas Emissions in Worcestershire
- Raise awareness of Climate Change Issues
- Assist adaptation to the impacts of Climate Change in Worcestershire.

What do you think of our plan?

We would welcome any views that you have on the content of this plan or the way in which Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Authority delivers its services.

If you have any comments or would like to contact us about any issue please contact us via our website www.hwfire.org

Alternatively you may write to

Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters
2 Kings Court,
Charles Hastings Way,
Worcester.
WR5 1JR
Tel: 0845 12 24454

If you would like this information in an alternative language or format such as large print or audio please contact us on 0845 12 24454.

APPENDIX 1 – Annual Governance Statement

To be included following approval at the June FRA.

APPENDIX 2 – Business Impact Analysis Form